

REMARKS

The Examiner's attention to the present application is noted with appreciation.

The Examiner rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Bellin (U.S. Patent 6,692,527). This rejection is traversed. Applicant conceived his invention prior to the filing of the Bellin patent and then diligently worked to constructively reduce the invention to practice. Enclosed herein is a Declaration of Prior Invention in a WTO Member Country under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 and its attachments. Note first the Dutch language correspondence between Van Oirschot Metaalindustrie B.V. of Tilburg and Mentor Medical Systems B.V. (Attachment H), employer of Applicant, concerning assembly drawings for the apparatus that is the subject of the present application. Also enclosed is an English translation of this letter (Attachment G). This letter is dated before the Bellin patent was filed on December 1, 1999 (the "Critical Date").

Further attached is correspondence between the municipality of Leiden and Mentor Medical Systems B.V. (Attachments A-B-C-D) pertaining to a permit for the modification of the existing plant being converted to a plant capable to operate according to the method of the invention. There is also a confirmation of receipt by the municipality of Leiden to Mentor Medical Systems B.V. (Attachments E-F) Attached to these documents are English translations. These correspondences are dated before the Critical Date.

Additionally attached is an intercompany fax from the US operations of Mentor Medical Systems B.V. to Mr. Johan Smit (Applicant) and employee of Mentor Medical Systems B.V. (Attachment I) In this fax, drawings are submitted pertaining to the apparatus and method of the invention. This fax is dated before the Critical Date.

Also attached are Dutch language letters dated April 25, 2000, June 26, 2000 and July 14, 2000 discussing the invention and a draft of the Dutch patent application accompanying the July 14, 2000 letter (Attachments K-L-M). A feasibility study was then conducted which led to the filing of the priority application for the present application on September 24, 2001.

The Examiner rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Curtis (EP 0416846 A2). This rejection is traversed. Curtis fails to teach or even mention that prior to the repeated dipping of the mould; the Curtis invention is partly emerged in a plastic solution such as to allow the top side of the mould to come in contact with the solution as recited by Applicant's claim 6. Instead, Curtis teaches that mandrels are mounted on a dripping fixture and dipped into a tank containing liquid dispersion of an elastomer, the mandrels are dipped as many as nine times (See Col. 3, lines 43-53). No where does Curtis teach that prior to repeatedly dipping the mould, the invention is partly immersed in a plastic solution such as to first allow the topside of the mould to come in contact with the solution as taught by Applicant's claim 6. Thus, Curtis fails to anticipate Applicant's claim 6.

With regard to claim 7, it is submitted that the allowability of this claim follows the allowability of claim 6.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all grounds of rejection have been traversed. It is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance and same is respectfully requested.

If any issues remain, or if the Examiner believes that prosecution of this application might be expedited by discussion of the issues, the Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned attorney for Applicant at the telephone number listed below.

Authorization is given to charge payment of any additional fees required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Acct. 13-4213. Enclosed herein is a three month extension of time extending the deadline to January 20, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments:

- A. Translation of letter dated 13 January 1999 from Mentor Medical Systems to Gemeente Leiden (Municipality of Leiden) (1Pg).
- B. Dutch language letter dated 13 January 1999 from Mentor Medical Systems to Gemeente Leiden (Municipality of Leiden) (1Pg).
- C. Translation of enclosures (Notification Article of Environmental Management Act dated 13 January 1999, Environmental Report, and two drawings) to letter dated 13 January 1999 from Mentor Medical Systems to Gemeente Leiden (Municipality of Leiden) (5Pgs).
- D. Dutch language enclosures (Notification Article of Environmental Management Act dated 13 January 1999, Environmental Report, and two drawings) of letter dated 13 January 1999 from Mentor Medical Systems to Gemeente Leiden (Municipality of Leiden) (5Pgs).
- E. Translation of letter dated 28 January 1999 from Gemeente Leiden (Municipality of Leiden) to Mentor Medical Systems (1Pg).
- F. Dutch language letter dated 28 January 1999 from Gemeente Leiden (Municipality of Leiden) to Mentor Medical Systems (1Pg).
- G. Translation of letter dated 26 February 1999 from Van Oirschot Metaalindustrie B.V. to Mentor Medical Leiden with drawings (4Pgs).
- H. Dutch language letter dated 26 February 1999 from Van Oirschot Metaalindustrie B.V. to Mentor Medical Leiden with drawings (4Pgs).
- I. Fax transmittal letter dated March 23 1999 from Mentor Medical Systems, Irving, Texas to Mentor Medical, Leiden, Netherlands with 3 annotated drawings (5Pg).
- J. Letter from ACC Automation, Co. of Akron, Ohio dated January 30, 1998 to Mentor Medical Systems, Irving, Texas, soliciting manufacturing equipment and services related to "Precision Controlled Dipping Equipment and Engineering Services".
- K. Letter of 25 April 2000 from Mentor Medical Systems B.V. (Leiden) to Octrooibureau Los en Stigter B.V. in advance of 28 April 2000 meeting with invention disclosure.
- L. Letter of 26 June 2000 from Mentor Medical Systems B.V. (Leiden) to Octrooibureau Los en Stigter B.V. in advance of 28 April 2000 meeting with invention disclosure related to the automatic dipping machine for breast implants (Automatische dompelmachine voor borstimplantaten).
- M. Letter of 14 July 2000 from Octrooibureau Los en Stigter B.V. to Mentor Medical Systems B.V. (Leiden) with the first draft patent application for filing in the Netherlands.